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To survey the field of human values in such a way as to compel exact scientific observation and at the same time to disclose the immanent power of those values to stimulate loyalty, self-control, reverence, and a mystic faith, is a worthy achievement. In these days when theology is endeavoring to work out its problems in a scientific spirit, such a study of the spiritual life of man is of value, not only to students of ethics, but also to students of religion.

GERALD BIRNEY SMITH

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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### FELIX ADLER'S *PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE*<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Adler's rare personality, his many-sided activities and intimate contacts with all phases of human experience, gave pledge in advance that an ethical philosophy at his hands would be of unusual interest and profit. This pledge is fully redeemed in the present work.

Not the least interest of the book is found in its frankly personal note. Book I is devoted to an autobiographical Introduction. This record of personal development is so objective and illuminating that it offers the best possible propaedeutic to the author's moral theory. Here the reader follows Dr. Adler through his student days, and notes the influence of his teachers, his rejection of the traditional theism in which he was reared, his study of Kant, and his interest in social questions aroused by the writings of Lange. Then follow accounts of his gradual separation from the Hebrew faith and of his fresh study of the teachings of the gospel, to which he expresses a deep obligation, though compelled to reject the view that they attain ethical finality. The chapter on "Social Reform" may be especially commended to all social workers. The radical defect of programs of social reform lies in their failure to present an ethical end to which all improvements in material conditions must be instrumental. Dr. Adler is not indifferent, as all know who have followed his career, to the betterment of material conditions. But he well insists that, without a clear perception of the spiritual goal, desires for wealth are kindled which lead only to a vicious spiral of worldly ambition.

Book II, on "Philosophical Theory," contains an elaborate critique of Kant, and presents the author's own conception of an "infinite spiritual universe," an "infinite community of spiritual beings." The unity of "this infinite assemblage" consists in this—"that the unique difference of

<sup>1</sup> *An Ethical Philosophy of Life*. By Felix Adler. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1918. viii+380 pages. \$3.00.

*each shall be such as to render possible the correlated unique differences of all the rest.*" Man has "worth" only "as a member of the infinite ethical manifold"; his task is to achieve uniqueness and to elicit it in others. Further, the conception of the "infinite spiritual universe," and the place of the individual in it, is not, according to the author, based upon empirical evidence derived from the existing moral order. It is rather a product of the "reality-producing function" of the mind, by the use of the principles of unity and manifoldness, which, to avoid the misleading implications of the term *a priori*, are called "functional finalities."

Thinkers will here raise significant questions. Granted a spiritual community of moral personalities, are we justified in identifying it at once with "reality," with the "infinite universe"? Or is its reality to be found within the universe, in the experience of the ethical beings who think and feel and will it? Again, is the conception reached by an immediate act of the mind, using the principles of "functional finality"? Or is it won by a creative process out of the experiences of the moral life, its defeats and successes, its frustrations and achievements? And still again, is not mere uniqueness, as such, and apart from the content of the moral life which is to be uniquely expressed by the individual, inadequate as a principle of worth? These are points, I think, at which Dr. Adler's theory challenges debate.

Books III and IV contain applications of the theory, and do not readily lend themselves to a brief summary. They present, however, many valuable discussions which, in not a few cases, bear directly upon vital issues of the present day. The ethical basis of property is found in "the control of external things for the maintenance and development of personality." No individual has an ethical right to "the great fortunes accumulated under the modern system of industry." Wages must be adjusted "with reference to the end to be served." "Adequate nourishment as to quantity and quality, suitable dwellings, educational opportunities, etc., are all indispensable to the rendering of service even by common laborers." This teleological method must be taken rather than that of attempting to determine, on genetic lines, a fair wage, for it is impossible to "construct an equation between labor and reward."

It is interesting to note that Dr. Adler favors vocational instead of geographical representation in the legislative body of the state. As for improvement in international relations, this will not come automatically by the growth of friendly intercourse, trade, and science. Only as the more advanced nations are awakened to the task of liberating the

potential spiritual life of the less advanced will they themselves find increased life. Until this ideal is accepted the "strong peoples will never cease to harm the weak, and in so doing to harm themselves."

This brief review can give only a suggestion here and there of the thought-provoking contents of Dr. Adler's work, and will best serve its purpose if it guides the reader to the book itself.

WALTER GOODNOW EVERETT

BROWN UNIVERSITY

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### WAR-TIME PREACHING<sup>1</sup>

This book is the work of both a preacher and a teacher. Dr. Davis has young men before him preparing for the ministry, and the chapters are full of materials and suggestion for the preacher; but he looks beyond his classes to the people of the churches, perplexed, disturbed, suffering, needing an interpreter of Christianity in the face of a world-war. The students and the churches would both be helped by these discussions.

There are men who speak with an aloofness from life. They are intent on their biblical or philosophical conceptions and are not disturbed even by the sounds of war. Sermons have been published in this year of grace without the grace of timeliness. They lack that touch of humanness, that sympathy and knowledge that make the message a living word. And there are men who only speak a passing word, whose sermons and addresses always tingle with present sensation, who rarely go back of phenomena to eternal truths. One can see the value of current opinion in such a mirror of the past as the *Education of Henry Adams*. Mr. Richard Whiting, the English novelist, has wittily said: "We turn to the editorials of our great dailies for guides of conduct, we go to Westminster Abbey for the latest news." Happy the preacher who unites the two great principles of religion in the light of present experience. The Bible is the book of life: it interprets life. But to understand its truth and spirit needs something of the fulness of life. The book of Dr. Davis is a good example of the gospel in life. It is just what the title indicates, "The Gospel in the Light of the Great War."

It has special value because it is more than one man's interpretation. The field is too big for one man's experience to understand. Nothing is more marked than the individual reflections from this great experience

<sup>1</sup> *The Gospel in the Light of the Great War*. By Ozora S. Davis. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1919. vii+219 pages. \$1.25.